



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

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INFANTS MAKE UP MAJORITY OF PERTUSSIS HOSPITALIZATIONS IN COUNTY *Babies Are at Higher Risk For Complications from Whooping Cough*

The ongoing pertussis epidemic has resulted in 41 hospitalizations, most of them infants, the San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency announced today.

Of the 41 hospitalizations in the County to date, 30 were infants under the age of 1, five were children from 1 to 18 years of age, and six were older than 18. Furthermore, the total number of whooping cough cases jumped to 960, including two infants who died of complications from the disease.

In the past week, nine students were confirmed positive for pertussis at nine schools where other children and staff were potentially exposed to whooping cough. Last year, San Diego County reported 143 confirmed cases of pertussis. The previous record year for cases was 2005 with 371 confirmed cases.

"The high number of pertussis hospitalizations for children should motivate parents to make sure their child's immunizations are up to date," said Wilma Wooten, M.D., M.P.H., County Public Health Officer. "Parents and caretakers of infants should also get a Tdap booster shot to protect children, especially infants, from this highly contagious disease."

Residents who do not have health care coverage may visit a HHSA Public Health Center. The vaccine is covered by the State Medi-Cal program.

The CDC recommends that children get one dose of DTaP vaccine at the following ages: 2 months; 4 months; 6 months; 15 to 18 months and 4 to 6 years.

The CDC also recommends that children receive a booster shot of Tdap vaccine at 10-11 yrs. The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) recommends an adolescent-adult pertussis booster vaccine (Tdap) for everyone 10 years or older who has not yet received it, especially women of childbearing age, before, during, or immediately after pregnancy; and other people, including household contacts, caregivers, and health care workers, who have contact with pregnant women or infants. Children 7-9 years of age who did not receive all of their routine childhood shots are recommended to receive a Tdap booster dose.

A typical case of pertussis in children and adults starts with a cough and runny nose for one-to-two weeks, followed by weeks to months of rapid coughing fits that sometimes end with a whooping sound. Fever, if present, is usually mild. The disease is treatable with antibiotics.

For more information about whooping cough, please call the HHSA Immunization Branch at (866) 358-2966, or visit the web site at www.sdiz.org.

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This week's new pertussis cases where there is a potential for public exposure are:

- A 5-year-old who was up-to-date on immunizations and attends Del Mar Hills Elementary School in the Del Mar Union School District. Contact: Cara Schukoskey (858) 755-9301.
- A 6-year-old who was up-to-date on immunizations and attends Stuart Mesa School in the Oceanside Unified School District. Contact: Steve Lombard (760) 966-4000.
- A 7-year-old who was not up-to-date on immunizations and attends Rancho de la Nacion Elementary School in the National School District. Contact: Diana Chase (858) 966-7542.
- A 6-month-old who was up-to-date on immunizations and attends Miramar Infant & Toddler Center. Contact: Nancy Walker (619) 556-7033.
- A 12-year-old who was due for a booster shot and attends Del Mar Heights Elementary School in the Del Mar Union School District. Contact: Cara Schukoskey (858) 755-9301.
- A 3-year-old who was up-to-date on immunizations and attends Sycamore Ridge Elementary in the Del Mar Union School District. Contact: Cara Schukoskey (858) 755-9301.
- A 15-year-old who was up-to-date on immunizations and attends Canyon Crest High School in the San Dieguito Union High School District. Contact: Bruce Cochrane (760) 753-6491.
- A 15-year-old who was up-to-date on immunizations and attends La Jolla Country Day School. Contact: Chris Lavin (858) 453-3440.
- A 14-year-old who was due for a booster shot and resides at St. Vincent de Paul Village. Contact: Ruth Bruland (619) 233-8500 ext. 1030.